

2019–2020 NC Final Exams of Social Studies Grades 6–8

North Carolina Assessment Specifications

Purpose of the Assessments

North Carolina Final Exams (NCFEs) for Social Studies measure students' academic progress in the [NC Essential Standards](#), adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE) in [December 2010](#).

NCFEs are not used for school and district accountability under the Accountability Model or for federal reporting purposes.

Developing Assessments

North Carolina educators are recruited and trained to write new items for the NCFEs. The diversity among the item writers and their knowledge of the content standards are addressed during recruitment. Trained North Carolina educators also review items and suggest improvements, if necessary. The use of North Carolina educators to develop and review items strengthens the instructional validity of the items. Teachers interested in training to become an item writer or a reviewer for the North Carolina Testing Program can visit <https://center.ncsu.edu/ncpd/course/view.php?id=128>.

For an in-depth explanation of the test development process see [SBE policy TEST-013](#) or reference the [Test Development Process: Item, Selection, and Form Development](#).

Curriculum and Assessment Cycle

- 2010: North Carolina SBE adoption of the [NC Essential Standards](#)
- 2012–13: Operational administration of the Measures of Student Learning: Common Exams
- 2013–14: Redesign and subsequent first operational administration of the NCFEs
- 2014–15: Second operational administration of the NCFEs
- 2015–16: Third operational administration of the NCFEs
- 2016–17: Fourth operational administration of the NCFEs
- 2017–18: Fifth operational administration of the NCFEs
- 2018–19: Sixth operational administration of the NCFEs
- 2019–20: Seventh operational administration of the NCFEs

Prioritization of Standards

Members of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) Test Development Section invited teachers to collaborate and develop recommendations for a prioritization of the standards, indicating the relative importance of each standard, the anticipated instructional time, and the appropriateness of the standard for multiple-choice and constructed response item formats.

Tables 1–3 describe the range of total items that will appear on the NCFE forms. NCFEs for Grades 6, 7, and 8 contain only multiple-choice items. The multiple-choice items are worth one point each. In order to ensure that the four dimensions of historical thinking remain central to the history tests, item developers incorporated Standard 1 across as many items as possible.

Table 1. *Test Specification Weights for the **Grade 6** Social Studies NCFE*

Standard 1	Standard 2	Range of Total Items
6.H.1	H.2	18–24%
6.H.1	G.1	18–24%
6.H.1	G.2	8–12%
6.H.1	E.1	10–15%
6.H.1	C&G.1	18–24%
6.H.1	C.1	15–21%
Total		100%

Table 2. *Test Specification Weights for the **Grade 7** Social Studies NCFE*

Standard 1	Standard 2	Range of Total Items
7.H.1	H.2	13–24%
7.H.1	G.1	10–21%
7.H.1	G.2	3–14%
7.H.1	E.1	13–24%
7.H.1	C&G.1	13–24%
7.H.1	C.1	6–17%
Total		100%

Table 3. *Test Specification Weights for the **Grade 8** Social Studies NCFE*

Standard 1	Standard 2	Range of Total Items
8.H.1	H.2	10–17%
8.H.1	H.3	13–21%
8.H.1	G.1	10–17%
8.H.1	E.1	10–17%
8.H.1	C&G.1	9–17%
8.H.1	C&G.2	6–14%
8.H.1	C.1	10–17%
Total		100%

Cognitive Rigor

The items on the Social Studies NCFEs were aligned to the [NC Essential Standards](#) using the Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy (RBT).

Types of Items and Supplementary Materials

The Grades 6–8 Social Studies NCFEs consist of four-response-option multiple-choice items.

Many of the items require students to process factual content as they read, interpret, and/or analyze stimulus material, including maps, graphs, and excerpts of primary- and secondary-source documents.

The answer sheet (i.e., multiple-choice only) may be reviewed at the [NCDPI/Accountability Services](#) website.

A complete list of the supplemental test materials (i.e., *2019–2020 NC Final Exams Materials List*) may be reviewed at the [NCDPI/Accountability Services](#) website.

Released items are available on the [NCDPI/Accountability Services](#) website. Released items may be used by school systems to help acquaint students with items. The released items, however, may not reflect the breadth of the standards assessed and/or the range of item difficulty found on the NCFE. These materials must not be used for personal or financial gain. The released items are also available to schools through NCTest, the NCDPI’s online assessment platform.

Schools must ensure every student participating in an online assessment for the North Carolina Testing Program has completed the appropriate Online Assessment Tutorial for the associated assessment(s) at least one time per year at the school before test day. The tutorial provides students the opportunity to practice the mechanics of navigating through the testing platform, to become familiar with the tools, and to respond to the sample items. Refer to the [Online and Paper/Pencil Test Administrator’s Guide](#) for additional information.

Testing Structure and Test Administration Time

The Grades 6–8 Social Studies NCFEs contain a total of 42 multiple-choice items.

Included in the total item counts are embedded multiple-choice field test items that will not count toward or against a student’s score. These items are examined for inclusion on future operational assessments.

NC Final Exam 2018–19	Number of Operational Items	Number of Field Test Items*	Total Number of Items
Grade 6 Social Studies	37 multiple-choice	5 multiple-choice	42
Grade 7 Social Studies	37 multiple-choice	5 multiple-choice	42
Grade 8 Social Studies	37 multiple-choice	5 multiple-choice	42

*Field test items will not count toward or against a student’s score.

Students will be given 120 minutes to answer all items.

Appendices A–C show the number of operational test items for each clarifying objective for the 2019–20 exams. Note that future coverage of objectives could vary within the constraints of the content category weights in Tables 1–3.

Test Cycle and Delivery Mode

The NCFEs are administered to students enrolled in fall, spring, and yearlong courses. A list of course codes that align with the 2019–20 NCFEs (i.e., *Course Codes that Align with the NC Final Exams*) is available on the [NCDPI/Accountability Services](#) website.

The NCFEs are administered through NCTest, the NCDPI’s online assessment platform. Paper editions are also available.

The NCFEs are only provided in English; translated versions are not available.

Appendix A
Grade 6 NC Final Exam 2019–20
Number of Operational Items by Clarifying Objectives

The following table shows the number of operational (scored) test items for each clarifying objective. Note that future coverage of objectives could vary within the constraints of the test specification weights in Tables 1–3. Some objectives not designated with tested items (i.e., “–”) may be a prerequisite objective, may be tested within the context of another objective, or may be included as an embedded field test item.

<u>Grade 6 Social Studies</u> <u>Clarifying Objectives</u>	Number of Operational Items by Objective
Understand the political, economic and/or social significance of historical events, issues, individuals, and cultural groups.	
6.H.2.1	5
6.H.2.2	–
6.H.2.3	–
6.H.2.4	2
Understand geographic factors that influenced the emergence, expansion, and decline of civilizations, societies, and regions (i.e. Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas) over time.	
6.G.1.1	1
6.G.1.2	1
6.G.1.3	2
6.G.1.4	3
Apply the tools of a geographer to understand the emergence, expansion, and decline of civilizations, societies, and regions.	
6.G.2.1	4
6.G.2.2	–
Understand how the physical environment and human interaction affected the economic activities of various civilizations, societies, and regions.	
6.E.1.1	3
6.E.1.2	2
Understand the development of government in various civilizations, societies, and regions.	
6.C&G.1.1	2
6.C&G.1.2	1
6.C&G.1.3	1
6.C&G.1.4	3
Explain how the behaviors and practices of individuals and groups influenced societies, civilizations, and regions.	
6.C.1.1	1
6.C.1.2	4
6.C.1.3	2

Appendix B
Grade 7 NC Final Exam 2019–20
Number of Operational Items by Clarifying Objectives

The following table shows the number of operational (scored) test items for each clarifying objective. Note that future coverage of objectives could vary within the constraints of the test specification weights in Tables 1–3. Some objectives not designated with tested items (i.e., “–”) may be a prerequisite objective, may be tested within the context of another objective, or may be included as an embedded field test item.

<u>Grade 7 Social Studies</u> <u>Clarifying Objectives</u>	Number of Operational Items by Objective
Understand the implications of global interactions.	
7.H.2.1	2
7.H.2.2	1
7.H.2.3	2
7.H.2.4	2
Understand how geography, demographic trends, and environmental conditions shape modern societies and regions.	
7.G.1.1	3
7.G.1.2	1
7.G.1.3	2
Apply the tools of a geographer to understand modern societies and regions.	
7.G.2.1	–
7.G.2.2	4
Understand the economic activities of modern societies and regions.	
7.E.1.1	2
7.E.1.2	2
7.E.1.3	3
7.E.1.4	–
Understand the development of government in modern societies and regions.	
7.C&G.1.1	2
7.C&G.1.2	3
7.C&G.1.3	1
7.C&G.1.4	2
Understand how cultural values influence relationships between individuals, groups, and political entities in modern societies and regions.	
7.C.1.1	2
7.C.1.2	3

Appendix C
Grade 8 NC Final Exam 2019–20
Number of Operational Items by Clarifying Objectives

The following table shows the number of operational (scored) test items for each clarifying objective. Note that future coverage of objectives could vary within the constraints of the test specification weights in Tables 1–3. Some objectives not designated with tested items (i.e., “–”) may be a prerequisite objective, may be tested within the context of another objective, or may be included as an embedded field test item.

<u>Grade 8 Social Studies Clarifying Objectives</u>	Number of Operational Items by Objective
Understand the ways in which conflict, compromise, and negotiation have shaped North Carolina and the United States.	
8.H.2.1	2
8.H.2.2	2
8.H.2.3	1
Understand the factors that contribute to change and continuity in North Carolina and the United States.	
8.H.3.1	1
8.H.3.2	2
8.H.3.3	3
8.H.3.4	1
Understand the geographic factors that influenced North Carolina and the United States.	
8.G.1.1	3
8.G.1.2	–
8.G.1.3	2
Understand the economic activities of North Carolina and the United States.	
8.E.1.1	2
8.E.1.2	2
8.E.1.3	2
Analyze how democratic ideals shaped government in North Carolina and the United States.	
8.C&G.1.1	1
8.C&G.1.2	2
8.C&G.1.3	1
8.C&G.1.4	1
Understand the role that citizen participation plays in societal change.	
8.C&G.2.1	1
8.C&G.2.2	1
8.C&G.2.3	2
Understand how different cultures influenced North Carolina and the United States.	
8.C.1.1	2
8.C.1.2	2
8.C.1.3	1